



Washington State Department of **CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES**

Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) Meeting
April 11, 2023

Regional Coalition & Washington Communities for Children (WCFC) Updates

Regional Coalition Update

Inland Northwest Early Learning Alliance, Northeast

For more information, please contact: Colleen Condon, colleen@lilaccityelc.com

Much of our time recently has been focused on building relationships with partners and families outside of Spokane County. It has been wonderful to see all of the work going on in the tri-county area, especially Ferry and Stevens Counties. These communities have robust coalitions dedicated to improving the health and well-being of their community. One of the focus areas of these coalitions is problem-solving the issue of sustainability of child care in rural areas. INWELA hosted a conversation around this topic. The meeting recording can be found [here](#).

INWELA has partnered with NEWESD101 to provide scholarships and travel reimbursements for their [Early Childhood Conference, Unite](#). The application will be available soon. Preference will be given to those traveling from rural communities and/or those with the most marginalized identities.

All of us have spent the month of March focused on Advocacy and our budget ask. We are so thankful to our legislative champions for pushing for WCFC to be included in the House budget.

Investing in Children Coalition: Central

For more information, please contact: Lindsay Bowsell, lindsayb@yakimavalleycf.org or Marina Medrano, marinam@yakimavalleycf.org

In recent months, we have been working on extending and enhancing our community outreach materials since spring and summer typically bring many outreach event opportunities. For instance, we recently purchased age-appropriate books and toys that encourage the healthy growth and development of young kids. We plan on distributing these materials to parents and caregivers at future outreach events where we'll share about Help Me Grow/ Ayúdame a Crecer Central WA.

We've also worked on sharing information about the recent Washington Working Families Tax Credit with our Coalition members so that they may share this opportunity with the families they work with.

Last but not least, Central WA health care providers can now refer families and caregivers to Help Me Grow/ Ayúdame a Crecer Central WA through an [online referral form](#). Since the implementation of this online form at the beginning of the year, the number of referrals that Carina receives has increased, meaning that more families in our region are getting connected to the resources they need.

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King County

For more information, please contact: Alexis Joshua, joshua@childcare.org or Bob Findlay, findlay@childcare.org

The KCELC is excited to report that Alexis Joshua and Bob Findlay will be serving as co-Regional Leads for the coalition and the King Area for Washington Communities for Children. Bob has been a long-standing coalition member with KCELC and is currently an Early Learning Coach Lead for Brightspark (previously known as Child Care Resources). Additionally, LoAn Nguyen, will be helping to coordinate the Family Voice Action Network for the coalition. LoAn is a parent of children who utilize early childhood education programs including In-Home Visit Program, ECEAP, and Head Start. She was also a member of the City of Seattle ECEAP Policy Council 2018- 2022 and a 2019 Washington State Association of Head Start & ECEAP (WSA) Parent Ambassadors Parent Ambassador Alumni.

We are still seeking applicants for Lead positions to help coordinate the Health Provider Action Network and the Resource Navigation Action Network. All Network Leads will receive a stipend for their work. For more information, please contact Alexis at kcelc@childcare.org. Lastly, the coalition has finalized its 2022 Annual Report that highlights the network's events and structural changes. The report will be available for review on the coalition's new website page on April 7th.

North Central

For more information please contact: Nancy Spurgeon, nsurgeon49@gmail.com
No updates to share at this time.

Northwest

For more information please contact: Linden Obel, linden@nwelcoalition.org

As a regional network of early childhood partners and local early learning coalitions, Northwest Early Learning Coalition continues to collaborate to ensure high-quality early learning experiences for all children. Our current focus areas have been 1) advocating for more equitable policies in the early learning field and 2) prioritizing resource navigation and access activities that improve how families with young children access the culturally responsive and high-quality resources they want and need to support their children's development and wellbeing.

Local and Regional Highlights:

Advocacy: We continue to advocate to our region's policymakers for Washington Communities for Children's budget request. This funding is essential to supporting the regional and local capacity of our coalitions. The Snohomish County Early Learning Coalition continues to pursue a wage equity campaign to support early learning professionals.

Community Asset Mapping: San Juan County Early Learning Coalition and Partners for Young Children in Island County hosted their joint community asset mapping partner meeting, which will inform the build-out of a robust resource directory and coordinated access points as part of the Help Me Grow system in our region and the state. Ultimately, the goal of this effort is to improve how families access resources and help identify opportunities for increased resource investment.

Early Learning Coordination Plan Exploration: The region is looking forward to aligning our work with the ELCP and continuing to leverage our regional and local connections to inform statewide early learning system priorities. The Children's Council of Skagit County, the local early learning coalition in Skagit County, has

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recently embarked on conversations and deep dives into the ELCP.

NWEL Coalition Retreat Planning: Over the past two years, NWEL Coalition has experienced multiple transitions in leadership, which has offered new insight and energy into our work and brought understandable challenges. The regional coalition is preparing for an in-person retreat in late spring to connect; revisit our charter and purpose, vision, and mission; and set new goals and align strategies with state and regional partner priorities.

Funding and Sustainability: The region and local coalitions continue to pursue funding opportunities to support capacity building, resource navigation and access activities, and other priorities.

Job announcement – Skagit County: Children’s Museum of Skagit County is hiring an Interim Family Resource Center Manager. For more details and to apply, [visit this link](#).

Peninsula Early Learning Coalition

For more information, please contact: Marlaina Simmons, marlaina.pecc@gmail.com and Elisia Anderson, elisiaf_fstep@olypen.com

No updates to share at this time.

Pierce County Early Childhood Network

For more information please contact: McKinley McPheeters, mckinleym@first5fundamentals.org

No updates to share at this time.

Southeast

For more information, please contact: Matt Bona, mbona@esd123.org

Asotin/Clarkston ELC:

- Clarkston School District is doing (ECEAP/TK) Preschool Observations and starting to think about kindergarten transition placements. The Clarkston School District will be completing the Kindergarten Round-up in May.
- Clarkston is opening online enrollment for their TK elementary schools.
- Rebecca Lockhart ACELC Lead has been a regular attendee at the LCECP – Lewis Clark Early Childhood Program Board Meetings.

Benton-Franklin Early Learning Alliance:

- BEFLA representatives attended WCFC Advocacy Day on February 1st. They had six successful meetings and discussed the state of early learning in the region, answered questions, and extended invitations to engage with the coalitions.
- Suzanne Suyama spent time in conversation about hosting a compression planning session in Spring to inform an action plan for both the Southeast Early Learning Coalition and the county coalitions (Benton Franklin Early Learning Alliance and the Walla Walla Valley Early Learning Coalition).
- Invited Delta Heiberg from DCYF to BEFLA's next meeting to review the Early Learning Coordination Plan.
- BEFLA is working on distributing Vroom Resources.

Walla Walla Early Learning Coalition:

- Nothing to report at this time.

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Southwest Washington Early Learning (SWEL)

For more information please contact: Debbie Ham, Debbie.ham@selfwa.org

Our SW Washington Child Care Partnership has assisted 5 Hispanic women with becoming licensed family child care providers, adding 34 bilingual/bicultural child care slots in Vancouver. Statewide WCFC in partnership with WASTEM has completed the regional 2023 State of Our Children Report. We will have a work plan in place by June to begin implementing a Share Services Alliance in our region. We are hosting a Child Care Summit in May 2023 – more details to come. We have 6390 children B-5 in Clark, Skamania & Klickitat Counties registered to receive books from the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. Throughout the region, child care remains a crisis. The combination of child care deserts and a workforce crisis prevent many working families from having access to needed programs.

Visions for Early Learning, West Central

For more information, please contact: Sheila Kavanaugh, kav.consulting231@gmail.com

No updates to share at this time.

WCFC Updates – For more information please contact: info@washingtongcfc.org

WCFC State Updates

For more information please contact: Rachel Hall, WCFC State Lead, rachelh@first5fundamentals.org

No updates to share at this time.